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Here's a NEW CHALLENGE!



COUNTY AGRICULTURAL AGENT

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The Research and Marketing Act Affords You New Extension Opportunities

EXTENSION SERVICE, U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
PA—181 SEPTEMBER 1951

EXTENSION'S JOB under the—

SMITH-LEVER ACT . . . "to aid in diffusing among the people of the United States useful and practical information on subjects relating to agriculture and home economics, and to encourage the application of the same * * *"

RESEARCH AND MARKETING ACT . . . "To the maximum extent practicable * * * marketing educational and demonstrational work done hereunder in cooperation with the States shall be done in cooperation with the State agricultural extension service * * *"

What Is This Marketing Act?

A primary objective of the Research and Marketing Act is to enable you to do as good a job in marketing as you have done in the field of production. Special opportunities are offered to work with all groups involved in the marketing of agricultural products, from the producer, processor, and handler to the ultimate consumer, so that marketing efficiency will be improved and the consumer supplied with the best nutrition, clothing, shelter, and services for the money spent.

The Research and Marketing Act has been set up by Congress in three headings or titles. It is Title II, commonly known as the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946, which gives Extension its particular opportunity to serve the people of the Nation to a much fuller extent than heretofore. This act provides for research and extension activities in marketing agricultural products, to the end that both producer and consumer will benefit. It encourages a close working relationship between research and Extension.

Where Does the County Agent Fit In?

Extension work in marketing is not new to the county agent. Many of our successful marketing organizations have had your help from their beginning. The Research and Marketing Act can accelerate extension activity in the field of marketing.

A committee of State directors of extension and deans of agriculture wrote a report in October 1950. This report states that the extension objective is to aid farmers,



processors, distributors, and consumers. It also asserts that if large-scale improvement in agricultural marketing and distribution is to be brought about, Extension's educational work must be greatly expanded and intensified, not only with producers but also with those who handle the farmer's produce or use it—such as processors, wholesalers, retailers, and consumers. Much of the emphasis needs to be placed upon educational programs with these nonfarm groups.

As a county agent you should—

1. Study the provisions of the act as it applies to extension work. Talk to your State extension director and marketing specialists to get more information. Your marketing specialists can give you the location of State RMA work in progress and the possibilities in your State.
2. Acquaint farm people and organization leaders with these resources for solving marketing problems.
3. Study your own local marketing problems in the field of processing and distribution.
4. Talk to your home agent about a joint consumer-education program. This applies especially to agents in metropolitan areas.
5. Call marketing research problems to the attention of your supervisors.

What Is Being Done?

Forty-four States and three Territories have 157 extension marketing projects covering the marketing of all agricultural commodities—consumer education, marketing information, processing, cooperative marketing, and retailer education. This involves one-half million dollars of RMA funds and at least an equal amount of local and State funds. Here are examples:

a. Grain marketing

Kansas is conducting an RMA wheat-marketing educational program with producers, elevator operators, dealers, and millers. The budget for the project includes $4,600 of RMA funds, which are matched with State funds. The purposes of the program are to assist growers in receiving full market value ac-

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cording to grade and quality, develop handling procedures to avoid mixing of good and poor varieties and grades, and prevent deterioration and waste in storing and handling of wheat. In 1950, county agents conducted demonstrations with producers and local handlers on insect control for stored grain and assisted in organizing and holding wheat-variety identification and grading schools. The program is coordinated with a regional wheat-marketing project covering all the hard red winter wheat States.

b. Consumer education

A Louisville, Ky., project, involving an annual grant of $3,800 of RMA funds matched by an equal amount of local funds, provides a home economics worker who prepares radio, television, and newspaper material on foods. She helps the consumer make good buys on the basis of both cost and nutritional value. The information is available to all home economics extension workers in Kentucky.

c. Poultry and eggs

Wisconsin has an egg-marketing project, the objective of which is to maintain egg quality as eggs move through the production and marketing channel from producer to consumer, and to increase the consumption of high-quality eggs in the market areas of Eau Claire and Chippewa Falls, and Milwaukee. County agents cooperate in planning and conducting the program. The program in each market area is carried on in three phases: (1) Work with poultry producers, (2) with egg wholesalers and retailers, and (3) with consumers.

d. Fruits and vegetables

Massachusetts has a fruit and vegetable marketing program involving extension personnel, producers, and members of the trade. Intensive work in the marketing of asparagus, strawberries, apples, and potatoes has furnished opportunities for county agents and cooperating specialists to work closely on specific marketing problems. RMA funds of $5,180 are matched by an equal amount of local funds.



e. Retailer education

Indiana has pioneered in the use of a highway trailer to take the educational program to food retailers in many parts of the State. The marketing specialist, in cooperation with county agents, arranges 1-day classes with small groups of retailers. Follow-up visits by the specialist are made to all trainees in their places of business. Consumer clinics deal with good buying, food preparation, and nutrition. The RMA part of the funds for this project is $2,500.

f. Hog marketing

Ohio has a hog-marketing project emphasizing the importance of providing pork for the consumer from the right type of hog. Fourteen county agents participated in conducting 30 live-grade and 30 carcass demonstrations from January 1950 to May 1951. These demonstrations have assisted hog producers, processors, and marketmen in developing a better understanding as to type, weight, and finish of live hogs that will yield carcasses high in primal cuts and quality pork. In addition, 250 producers attended live-hog grading and marketing demonstrations. RMA furnishes $4,000 for this project, and matching funds are from private sources within the trade.

What Can Be Done?

There are about 6 million producers, about 2 million handlers and operators, and more than 150 million consumers. An effective marketing program will vastly increase the number of these people reached. Projects in marketing under RMA—

1. Can be local, State-wide, regional, or national.
2. Must be designed to solve a particular marketing problem.
3. May involve the producer, hauler, processor, handler, or ultimate consumer.
4. Must be under the supervision of the State extension director.

How Are Projects Financed?

All State extension marketing projects involving RMA funds must be matched locally, dollar for dollar. Does this rule out the program as far as most States are concerned? Forty-four States say "No."

The matching funds may be from State, county, or



municipal sources. Private funds may be used. Some cooperating farmers have taxed themselves through a package-marketing charge to raise matching funds.

The matching funds must be administered by the State extension director.

Where Do We Start?

1. See the State extension director and the State extension marketing specialist. Both are familiar with the act and how it operates.
2. Work with the State RMA committee in the State county agent association. If the association has none, help to get a committee appointed and help to activate it.
3. Talk to neighboring county agents and other leaders regarding marketing problems of mutual interest.
4. Make a careful analysis, with leaders, of the marketing problems in your area.

OPPORTUNITIES

With the development of more marketing work, the Extension Service will need more market-trained men. Some will find it advantageous to pursue advanced study in the field of marketing, including commercial experience and field studies.

It is recognized that county agents have done much effective work in marketing. RMA offers a broader field for more work, more contacts, more services to the people we represent.

The well-balanced extension program should include educational work in effective distribution of agricultural products.

The alert county agent recognizes that marketing is just as important as production in his program.

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U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE 16—65737–1